

The

DARKHORSE NEWSLETTER

3D BATTALION, 5TH MARINES



FALLUJAH, IRAQ

12 MAY 2006

HALFWAY HOME

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In Memoriam

<i>PFC Sean Cardelli, 1st Plt, Co I</i>	<i>1 February 2006</i>	<i>Al Faris, Iraq</i>
<i>PFC Javier Chavez, Jr., 2nd Plt, Co I</i>	<i>9 February 2006</i>	<i>Al Amiriyah, Iraq</i>
<i>Cpl Ross Smith, 2nd Plt, Co I</i>	<i>9 February 2006</i>	<i>Al Amiriyah, Iraq</i>

They will never be forgotten.

Father eternal rest grant unto them, O' Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them.

Rest in peace Marines.

Happy Mother's Day to all the Darkhorse Mommas! We miss you dearly and will be thinking about you every day. Be-lated Feliz Cinco de Mayo as well. Oh ya and Military Spouse Appreciation Day.

Did someone say halfway? Are we excited? Heck yes as much if not more than you all, but we are tempering the excitement with the realization that we do still have halfway to go and there is a dogged enemy who can inflict pain & suffering if we drop our guard. We are fighting complacency the best way I know how, constant change & supervision. We will remain diligent and focused on accomplishing our mission. Sergeant Major and I get out almost daily to ensure that our Marines and sailors are keeping their heads in the game and I assure you they continue to impress me with their gung-ho spirit and can-do attitudes. Some must get nervous around the Sergeant Major they seem to clam up... others we can't get to stop talking. We've got all kinds... Marines from big families...up to 10 kids (and I've seen the pictures), more snow-boarders than skiers, aspiring hunting/fishing guides, expectant and new fathers, and sadly a few recent recipients of that infamous "Dear John", a few artists, musicians, photographers, only Marines in family, or those that are following in fathers (brothers, Uncles, cousins) footsteps, or in some cases joined the Corps just because the Old Man had not... those that lost in some case 100+lbs to join the Corps... 'ski's, 'tinez's, Jones's we got 'em all.

I'll tell ya though, at times it does get tough to focus on the here and now, last weekend I met with our replacement battalion commander via VTC, you may recognize the name Todd Des-grosseilliers (...kind of ironic isn't it?), their commanders visit is happening very soon. Soon after that their AdVon will be on

Commanding Officer's Message (Continued)

deck and ours will be headed your way... so as quick as I say remain focused... I can see how it's very easy to let our cross hairs slip off the V ring. All is well with Chris & Todd, they are eager to get it going much like we were. Very nice to know we've got a friend coming into replace us and will make the turnover more meaningful. On the same token, knowing we have a friend inbound gives us that incentive to ensure we are setting them up for success. So you may hear some rumblings of adjustments to unit locations... yes we are adjusting, all for the right reasons... mission success in one spot means you move on to the next trouble spot. Suffice to say we are NOT coming home any earlier, nor are we leaving the lovely suburbs of the greater Fallujah area... your Marines are already saying more than they should, bear with me and you all will either get the official word from me in the next newsletter or in the "what we did on our trip to Iraq" brief that will follow the deployment.

It is getting hot... only a few digits over 100 for a few days, but it felt like more. Surprisingly the weather has been "wetter" than I thought it would be... over-cast days with slight rain, or heavy rains depending and of course the ever pleasant dust storms... despite the weather our Marines are getting the job done. The Company Gunz and Platoon Sergeants are ensuring the Marines are pumping lots of water, with only an occasional Gatorade or soda. We've been given some pieces of gear designed to make us cooler... the jury is still out on most of this new "high speed / low drag gear". The only piece of gear that has been proven is the A/C! The Marines of the 4 shop are turning into wizards in maintaining generators to power A/Cs and reefers and where the 4 has not been able to keep up with the demand our industrious Marines have stepped up to the plate.

We are well into the point that we have started to send our EAS Non-deployers home. To a man these Marines have done great things for Corps and country. I tell them as they leave they are the "new old Corps" a generation of Marine that have spent their whole hitch either in combat or working up for it. Not that they had a choice in deploying, but their efforts during this deployment have been the most important, they are the resident experts and their being here has enabled them to pass on the their knowledge and experience to the next generation of Darkhorse Marine. On behalf of the nation, the Corps, their former commanders and the Darkhorse I thank them for their service and wish them "fair winds and following seas" in all their future endeavors. I know we will see many of them upon our return, or in the years to come in their Marine Corps League red blazers roaming the grinder of San Mateo pointing out to their sons/daughters and wives where they lived and worked during their time in the Darkhorse.

In summary, we remain focused on the tasks at hand. We are in the process of solidifying the post deployment leave schedule and TEEP, more to follow on that in the coming weeks. Keep us in your thoughts and prayers and we will do the same.

Semper Fidelis,

Pat Looney

Sergeant Major's Message

Family and Friends,

Well here we are in the merry month of May. I cannot account for where the time has gone. The men of the Battalion keep me quite busy in a very positive way, a lot of my time is spent in general conversations pertaining to career moves and choices. Having been a Marine for nearly 25 years, which, by the way, is longer than the majority of the men's lives to this point, but nonetheless, I find it very rewarding to help steer their career tracks in a positive direction which helps place them in jobs and Duty Stations where they have the opportunity to give back to the institution. Other times I find myself in a small crowd of Marines and we just shoot the breeze about what's going on in our lives. It's a beautiful thing to see these guys smile from time

Sergeant Major's Message (continued)

to time as we laugh about stupid things that would not make sense to anyone else but ourselves. It really takes the edge off.

On another note, our internet café is up and running. The Colonel and I wish we could attest to the fact that all Marines are benefiting from the technology, however that is not the truth. The Rifle Companies are all out in their Fob's throughout the A.O. and due to their tasks, their ability to rotate back to Camp Fallujah is limited. This is the reason why you are receiving a lot of letter mail from them vs. E-Mails. Again the Colonel and I wish we could place mini internet café within our entire Fob's with the conductivity to support it, But it's just not possible right now, however it is forthcoming in the near future possibly June.

This month was also a good one for some very deserving Marines as well. The Battalion Commander authorized the awarding of some Combat Meritorious Promotions which I have enclosed at the Bottom of this column. So if you happen to be one of the lucky spouses of one of our Meritorious Marines, check your direct deposit, you may find a tax free surprise contained in it.

In closing, I remind you that our time abroad is starting to decrease, which is good for all. But with that said, the Colonel and I will publish some information next month in regards to our arrival home so that you might start planning for Post Deployment Leave and getting a better rate on Air Fare Tickets. Again, it's your wonderful support that keeps us so Determined and Focused.

Sergeant Major Mike Kufchak

Combat Meritorious Promotions for 2 May 2006

Promoted to Lance Corporal

Jody A. Walters
Colby G. Okerlund
Josiah J. Swanson
Joshua M. Fosberg

Promoted to Corporal

Brandon A. Koch
Ibis A. Ramos
Kyle V. Hansen

Promoted to Sergeant

Jeremy G. Miller
Steven M Snell

Returning Marines (due to an honorable end of active service)

Cpl Diegel	Cpl Johnson	Cpl Salisbury
Cpl Enright	Cpl Labonte	Cpl Traylor
Cpl Heihn	Cpl Noreen	Cpl Vargas
Cpl Kessler	Cpl Rivkin	LCpl Sanchez
Cpl Estes	Cpl Rodriguez	LCpl Ramossavila
Cpl Henry	Cpl Sacks	

COMPANY NOTES

WEAPONS COMPANY

As Easter has past, I'd like to take the time to wish all of the Weapons Company mothers a happy Mother's Day. We now look forward to another month of answering the call to protect our nation and the interests of our allies. Our transition to Camp Fallujah was smooth thanks to MSgt. Herald, our company Operations Chief, as we are now prepared to continue the fight.

The Marines of Weapons Company, call sign "Vandal", are once again leading the battalion from the front. This month, we were specially tasked by the battalion commander to execute Operation Iron Fist II in order to intensify operations against those who wish to impede the progress of this fledgling nation. So far we have apprehended numerous terrorists and seized several weapons caches in hidden locations. These actions prove vital to the success of our mission as we hinder their capabilities to harm us and innocent Iraqi civilians. Our success is due, in small part, to the personal (Continued on page 4)

COMPANY NOTES

protective equipment provided for every Marine. Weapons Company's very own PFC. James C. Burnett Jr. was interviewed about the use of ballistic eye protection and its effectiveness. The article featuring PFC. Burnett should appear on the Official Marine Corps Website (<http://www.usmc.mil>) around the time this newsletter is published. As always, our success is due to the outstanding performance of the Weapons Company Marines and Sailors.

I'd like to take this time to congratulate the following Marines:

Awards:

Navy Commendation Medal:

Sgt Nicholas Toy
Cpl Brandon Phillips
Cpl Jeffrey Preston

Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medal:

Cpl William Porter
LCpl Daniel Ferguson
LCpl Kalar Komarec
LCpl Charles Taylor

I have two more additions to the Weapons Company family that I would like to announce. My congratulations and best wishes go out to Sonya and Sgt. Clifford Blade on the birth of their beautiful baby boy. Christopher Curtis Blade was born on April 5th. I also want to congratulate Chardae and Cpl. Richard Pliske on the birth of their beautiful baby boy. Mason Christopher Pliske was born April 22nd.

It is always a heart felt moment to say good bye to our fellow comrades, who have finally arrived at the end of active service. Their perseverance and total dedication to duty greatly contributed to the overall success of our mission here in Iraq. Their courageous actions to this point have been exemplary to say the least. It has been our pleasure to have served along side Cpl. James Mullins, Cpl. William Porter, LCpl. Daniel Ferguson and LCpl. Guillermo Padilla as they have unselfishly sacrificed their most precious possession; time. To Nicole Porter and Megan Mullins, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude for the support you have provided your husbands which allowed them to serve this nation honorably. These Marines will be departing Weapons Company this month for their return trip to the United States in preparation for their end of active service. Although their spirits are lifted due to their return trip, the morale of the Marines remaining in the fight has not faltered due to the steady flow of mail that continues to arrive daily.

I'd like to thank the various support organizations and family members on behalf of the Marines of Weapons Company for the luxuries you send: toiletries, letter writing supplies, clothing items, food, and all the assorted items we take for granted. Please continue to send us care packages, letter mail, moto-mail, and pictures. As always, thank you for your constant support, thoughts and prayers for Weapons Company.

Jonathon C. Holder
Company Commander

(Pics continued on page 5)



COMPANY NOTES



LIMA COMPANY

During the month of April, we officially passed the halfway point of our deployment! Time continues to fly by for us out here as we count the days until our return home. Your Lima Company Marines continue to conduct counter-insurgency operations along the Fallujah Peninsula. Combat operations are definitely in full swing and your Marines are doing an outstanding job at disrupting insurgent activity. April was a very busy month for the Marines of Lima Company. Our company turned over operational control of Entry Control Point 5 to 1st Battalion, 25th Marines. Concurrently, a major engineering effort took place at Firm Base Gold to allow for additional living quarters for our Marines. Our Marines and Sailors continue to be recognized for their superb performance. Congratulations to Lance Corporal Walters, who was recognized as the Darkhorse Marine of the Month. He also received a Meritorious Combat Promotion to his current rank on May 2nd. We would also like to congratulate HN Montoya. Doc Montoya was chosen as the Darkhorse Sailor of the Month. They are true examples of the Marines and Sailors of Lima Company. Congratulations also go out to the Porter family who brought a new addition to the world during the month of April. Doc Porter was actually able to talk to his wife in the delivery room as she delivered a healthy baby boy, Kaidan Owen Porter! Although we have been here for over 3 months, Iraq remains a very dangerous place. A few of our Marines were attacked with Improvised Explosive Devices this month and luckily were just a little banged up. Two of our Marines, Sgt Jennings and Cpl Jaime were injured a little more seriously. On 08 April, Sgt Brian Jennings was shot in the leg while on patrol. While protecting locals from an IED found during his patrol on 30 April, Cpl Jaime received shrapnel wounds to his leg when the IED suddenly detonated. Both Marines are doing well and are on their way home to recover from their injuries. Our thoughts and prayers for speedy recoveries are with these two Warriors. A special debt of gratitude goes to three of our Marines, who are returning home after four years of honorable, brave service--the majority of that service here in Iraq. Sgt Soriano, Cpl Castenada, and Cpl Holtzmann have done an exceptional job with us and we would like to thank all of them for their sacrifices and service to our country; God bless and Semper Fidelis. I would like to thank all of you at home for keeping your Marines focused and for reminding them to remain vigilant. We still have a few months to go and we can't afford complacency as nothing here is routine. I will continue to ensure that your Marines keep in contact with you as you are their major source of support. Please, continue to keep us in your thoughts and prayers as you are in ours!

Respectfully,

Captain Allen
Company Commander

COMPANY NOTES(continued)

KILO COMPANY

Hello to the Samurai family, friends, and loved one's. The heat is on! As the temperature rises, so does the anticipation of our return home. As we hit the mid point of our deployment, the men are in good spirits and continue to excel in assisting the good people of Iraq. And as we enter the hot months of our deployment you can expect our Marines to get a little thinner. I can assure you that they are eating well, especially, when they receive your care packages.

The following Marines' hard work and dedication to duty has paid off. They were promoted on 1 May to their present rank:

Sgt Lenard	Cpl Gorges	LCpl Lunardini	LCpl Kraus
	Cpl Federlin	LCpl Larsen	LCpl Faulkner
		LCpl Lopez, J	LCpl Largo
		LCpl Moreno	LCpl Austin
		LCpl Monlux	LCpl Frendenburg

Happy Birthday to the following Marines, as they celebrated their birthdays here in Iraq during the month of May:

1stLt Diaz (26)	Cpl Foust (7)	LCpl Logel (2)
PFC Leyva (8)	Cpl Peck (9)	LCpl Humphrey (11)
LCpl Batista (14)	Cpl Ramirez (14)	Cpl Gregston (14)
PFC Moreno (19)	PFC Sam (19)	Cpl Magincaida (20)
PFC Thompson (20)	LCpl Ellenson (20)	Cpl Maxwell (23)
LCpl Bachica (25)	LCpl Lee (25)	

Special thanks to Sgt McCauley and Sgt Ressureccion, these two Marines have departed Iraq and will soon exit our Marine Corps with an Honorable Discharge. I would like to thank them for there dedication to our Country and Corps. There leadership and experience will truly be missed for the remainder of our deployment. I would like to thank them for a job well done as they continue to pass on our legacy in their future endeavors, I am certain they will continue to be an important part of these Marines lives. Good luck to them and I am certain they will continue to carry on our legacy of "Once a Marine, always a Marine."

Special recognition goes out to Cpl Fernandez for his outstanding contribution to the company. Cpl Fernandez's hard work and dedication during the month of April earned him the title of "NCO of the Month" for the Battalion. With this recognition he was awarded a Meritorious Mast, signed by the Battalion Commanding Officer and a special liberty pass (72 hours) to enjoy upon our return home. Job well done!!

In a special operation conducted by Marines of 3rd Platoon, call sign "Operation Wheel Chair," the Marines delivered a wheel chair to an Iraqi girl who suffered injuries to her legs. The photo shows the excitement on the child's face as the chair is delivered by Sgt Homestead, 3rd Squad Leader, 3rd Platoon (photos displayed on page 7).



If there is any way that we may be of assistance to you or your family please do not hesitate to let us know. You can reach the Company 1stSgt at: rsalinasusmcdi8511@hotmail.com.

COMPANY NOTES(continued)

(Photos taken by Cpl Leal, 3rd Plt)



On behalf of the Marines of Kilo Company I would like to take this time to wish all Mother's and Mother's to be a **HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY**. I am certain that the Marines will flood our phones in attempt to contact their spouses and mother's on this very special day.

As always, I would like to thank you for your continued support. I believe it is the care packages, letters and phone calls that our men receive and make that continue to keep them focused on the job on hand. Your dedication to mail care packages, letters, and motto mail does not go unnoticed. I thank you very much, for it is you that makes my job easier here. The happiness that your mail brings these men is unbelievable. Please continue to support them; I thank you on behalf of these fine young men.

Captain E. Correa
Company Commander

1stSgt R. Salinas
Company 1stSgt

H&S COMPANY

Greetings to all the Darkhorse Family & friends from the outskirts of Fallujah. We are all doing fine in the Headquarters and Service Company. As promised, here are a few good shots of the gang here in their new home at Area-6 AKA South Park. The name of the camp seems to stick and the marines are enjoying the commodities that are offered here. As always, we are very pleased to share some of our hard work with our families, and will continue to do so. On behalf of Headquarters and Service Company, I would like to thank the families and friends for their continued support and prayers as we are winding down in our deployment.

In closing, I hope the pictures are enjoyable and that the families, as well as the Marines of Headquarters and Service Company are looking forward to the next month's newsletter.

Semper Fidelis & God Bless,

Monte S. Powell
Company Commander

(Pictures continued on page 8)

COMPANY NOTES (Continued)



COMPANY NOTES (Continued)

INDIA COMPANY

Can you say HOT!!!! It's getting hot and that only means one thing; the hotter it gets the closer we are to returning home. On that note we will have the following Marines returning home during the month of May to transition back to the civilian life-style: Sgt Pelton, Sgt Zeigler, Cpl Enright, Cpl Rodriguez, Cpl Traylor, Cpl Henry, Cpl Noreen, Cpl Ross, Cpl Beauchamp, Cpl Nelson, Cpl Kessler, and LCpl Snachez. They have served their country honorably and with pride. They are a great bunch and they will be truly missed!

In a previous letter I informed you that your Marines and Sailors are continuing there education. The Marines continue to amaze me with their drive and determination to complete correspondence courses. This will ensure that they stay competitive with their peers. The Sailors are also on a mission to receive the coveted Fleet Marine Force Enlisted Warfare qualification. It will require some hard work and dedication to their studies for this distinction. They are on track to complete this in a timely manner.

I wanted to let you all know that since the arrival of the new chow hall, your Marines are eating very well. They are eating steak and lobster and finishing the meal off with a slice of cheesecake. The new chow hall came at a perfect time and the Marines are definitely eating healthy.

I will close for now and I look forward on writing to you next month. Take care and God Bless!!!!

Dathan C. Edwards
First Sergeant

edwardsdc@gcemnf-wiraq.usmc.mil



Key Volunteer Corner

Homecoming Planning

Dear Family and Friends of 3/5 Marines & Sailors,

If you would like to help out with the homecoming planning or gift baskets, please contact Natalie Lucero at nlucero@apu.edu. We would love all the help we can get to provide our Marines and Sailors with a welcoming homecoming.

Join our Team~We are always in need of KV's. Below is a list of the classes offered at Camp Pendleton this month. If you are unable to attend a class and are still interested, you can contact Natalie Lucero or Mary Looney for more information at nlucero@apu.edu or mary_looney@cox.net

Saturday May 20 (0830-1600)

Tues/Wed June 20 & 21 (0830-1200)

Tues/Wed July 11 & 13 (1800-2100)

Call(760) 725-6637 to reserve your spot in a class today!

FRIDAY, MAY 12, 2006 ~ MILITARY SPOUSE APPRECIATION DAY

For the times you've stood and watched a ship sail from the harbor, an aircraft disappear into the clouds, or a truck convoy pull out of sight, not sure when they would return, we thank you.

For the countless household moves you've made from a place you know to one that's strange and different -- often by yourself -- we thank you.

For the families you've held together, for the anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays you've celebrated alone, we thank you.

For the hand you've extended to another military spouse when the need was there, truly creating a military family, we thank you.

For the spirit and strength you've shown when your service member has gone into harm's way, we thank you.

For the pride you've displayed while serving as an ambassador of the military spouse to the rest of the world, we thank you.

Military spouses ... stand tall, stand proud ... we salute you, you are truly our unsung heroes!!

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY!!!

M - O - T - H - E - R

"M" is for the million things she gave me,

"O" means only that she's growing old,

"T" is for the tears she shed to save me,

"H" is for her heart of purest gold;

"E" is for her eyes, with love-light shining,

"R" means right, and right she'll always be,

Put them all together, they spell "MOTHER,"

A word that means the world to me. *Howard Johnson (c. 1915)*

Key Volunteer Corner (continued)

When a boy becomes a man,
There's no fanfare of trumpets blowing
It doesn't happen overnight
It happens with no one knowing

He appears at a crossroad in his life
Having been taught wrong from right
Making decisions for himself
Becomes easy, like turning on the light

Moving away from the parents home
Is often called "leaving the nest"
Spreading his wings to fly all alone
Putting responsibility to the test

How does a mother express her pride?
Her love, her congratulations?
Hopefully, if she's raised him right
He'll know without hesitation

Feedback

Comments for the newsletter can be emailed to Mary Looney at
mailto:mary_looney@cox.net

Reminders

- If you are moving and or your information has changed please get your current information to your KV.
- If you plan to live in base housing upon your Marine/Sailors return please contact the housing office at (760) 725-6246 for more information. It is advised you start this process early!

3/5 Note Cards For SALE ~ (All proceeds go to the battalion)

Contact Christina Wesson for more information at wessondarkhorse@gmail.com.

Directory

Emergency 911		Exceptional Family Member Program	760-725-5363
American Red Cross	1-800-951-5600	Relocation Section	760-725-3804
Armed Services YMCA	760-385-4921	New Parent Support Section	760-725-3884
Auto Hobby Shop Mainside	760-725-0595	Lifeskills Management Section	760-725-8519
Mainside parts Department	760-725-5092		
Base Housing	1-800-843-2182	DEERS/Pass & ID	760-725-2768
Base Information	760-725-4111	Fisher Children's Center	760-725-0845
Camp Pendleton Naval Hospital	760-725-1288	Legal Assistance	760-725-6172
Family Medical Clinic	760-725-5381		
Internal Medicine Clinic	760-725-1364	Marine Corps Family Team Building:	
Pediatric Development	760-725-9457	L.I.N.K.S	760-725-2335
Immunization Clinic	760-725-1451	CREDO	760-725-4954
TRICARE Outpatient Clinic	760-966-7500	KVN Training	760-725-6637
Base Duty Chaplain	760-725-4700	Deployment/Readiness Support	760-725-1337
Child Development Programs:		PREP	760-725-6310
Administrative Office	760-725-6308	Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society	760-725-5337
Child Care Resource/Services	760-725-9723	TRICARE	1-800-242-6788
Family Child Care	760-725-7631	Vehicle Registration	760-725-2106
Community Support Services	760-725-5361	WIC	1-800-500-6411